WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Agricultural Adjustment Agency
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DUSTING OR SPRAYING PEANUTS

Suggested script for broadcast by member of AAA or Extension Service with Radio Farm Director or Announcer — or as an interview between two members of either farm agency.

ANNOUNCER: There was an old adage I used to hear as a youngster which reminded me that if a thing is worth doing, it's worth doing well. And that's a pretty good thing to remember. If you're going to spend your time in doing a job, it pays to spend a little extra time to do a good job. And that adage can apply to farming as well as to anything else. So today, we've asked Mr. B (name), (title), to tell our farm listeners how they can put in a little extra time on their peanut crop in order to do a better job.

What is your word to the wise for today, Mr. B_____?

B: Well, to button up my advice for today in a peanut shell, I'd say dust or spray your peanut crop for higher yields.

ANNOUNCER: That's all very well. It's clear and concise. But we'd like to know a little more about it. "Dust or spray your peanut crop for higher yields. Dust or spray with what? And what's the difference between dusting and spraying, and which is better? And why does that increase your yields, and . . . ."

B: Wait a minute, (name)! One question at a time, and slower please! Let's begin at the beginning and straighten all this out in words of one syllable.

ANNOUNCER: Sure. Let's back up and start out with a field of peanuts, properly planted and cultivated, growing like all good peanuts should. And then what?

B: Then one day you notice some spots on the lower leaves of your peanut plants.

ANNOUNCER: And that means leaf-spot.

B: Right. Or maybe you notice that a few leaf-hoppers — deadly little insect enemies -- working on the leaves of your plants. Then it's time to dust or spray your crop to be sure you get a good yield.

ANNOUNCER: How does dusting or spraying increase your peanut yields?

B: Well, in the first place, leaf-spot, unless it's treated, causes a severe spotting and the leaves drop off. Leaf-hoppers feed on the plant and make it hard for that plant to support the developing peanuts. But if you treat the plants before these pests get in too much of their dirty work, the foliage is retained and your crop has the advantage of the full growing season. And your harvest period is extended.

ANNOUNCER: That sounds all right to me, but how do you know that increases the yield?

B: You sound as if you came from Missouri, _____. But I can show you if that's what it takes. I can show you with figures taken from actual tests in the field.

ANNOUNCER: Well, show me then. I'm willing to be convinced.

B: In the past few seasons, fifty-seven tests were made in Georgia. Tests in which sulphur dust was used on Spanish peanuts gave an average increase in yields of over three hundred pounds per acre. Estimating on the conservative side, that was raising the value of his crop to the farmer by at least twenty-five dollars an acre, after you deduct the cost of the materials used in dusting.

ANNOUNCER: Now that's talking my language, when you break it down to actual cold, hard cash in the farmer's pocket.

B: Yes indeed. And that's just one set of experiments. Farmers all over the peanut belt have proved the same thing to themselves by trying it out.

ANNOUNCER: That being the case, let's go into this thing a little further. Let's go into the when and how of the treatment.

B: Well, hitting the <u>when</u> first, the farmer should begin dusting or spraying just as soon as he sees the first spots on the lower leaves. If he's raising the Spanish type, he'll probably find them about sixty to sixty-five days after planting. Runner and Virginia varieties begin to show spots about ten days later.

ANNOUNCER: Can he dust or spray his crop just once and let it go at that?

B: Not for the best results. Generally speaking, if the farmer catches these peanut pests when the spots first appear and dusts or sprays, then following up with about three applications at two week intervals, then he's pretty sure of good results. If a heavy rain should come up within twenty-four hours after a treatment, then he'd better do it again.

ANNOUNCER: Could you tell us how you would go about this dusting or spraying process?

B: The best advice I could give you on that would be to talk it over with your county agent, the State Extension Service, or State Experiment Station. But I could give you some general rules of procedure.

ANNOUNCER: Let's hear them.

B: Dusts may be applied when the plants are dry or slightly damp, and sprays when the leaves are dry. Put on the dust when the air is still, usually in early morning or evening. If it rains hard within twenty-four hours after dusting, the vines should be dusted again right away.

ANNOUNCER: Which is better, hand or machine dusting or spraying?

B: I'd say by machine. Standard power-driven dusting or spraying equipment will do — the same kind you would use for cotton or any other row crop. Hand dusting doesn't work so well because it's so much slower and harder to do a good job of covering the plants completely, particularly the undersides of the leaves.

ANNOUNCER: That's all very well, but it's not as easy as it once was for farmers to get hold of the machinery they need.

B: True enough. But multiple-row dusters and sprayers can be found in almost every community in the peanut belt. Maybe it will take a little more effort to figure out how you can get hold of one at the proper time, but when you do work it out, the results will more than repay you for that extra effort.

ANNOUNCER: All this talk of dusting and spraying, but you haven't yet told us what it is you're putting on the plants. What materials do you use?

B: I know I haven't said anything about that. For dusting I would use sulphur or copper-sulphur dust. For spraying, Bordeaux mixture, made by using four pounds of hydrated lime and four pounds of snow copper sulphate to each fifty gallons of water has proved most practical. Further informa tion can be obtained from your county agent.

ANNOUNCER: Is it better to dust or spray?

B: That depends. Spraying is usually more trouble than dusting. So, because it is so simple and inexpensive, dusting is usually recommended. But if you can get the equipment for spraying and you can't for dusting, then I'd say you'd better spray.

ANNOUNCER: You say dusting is inexpensive. Wha t does inexpensive mean to you?

B: Well, say you want to use copper sulphur dust. That's one of the

better ones. You'd need about fifteen to twenty pounds of dust per acre for each treatment, or just about seventy-five pounds for the four treatments. Your copper-sulphur dust costs from four dollars and seventy-five cents to five dollars and fifty cents a hundred pounds. Dusting grade sulphur usually costs from three dollars to three dollars and fifty cents a hundred pounds. If we figure an increased yield of 300 pounds per acre, with peanuts selling for seven to eight cents per pound, and with the increased production of hay selling at current prices, there is a gain of at least twenty-five dollars per acre above the cost of material.

ANNOUNCER: That's not bad.

B: Not half bad. And that's not all. A peanut crop that has been properly treated gives a much better grade of hay.

ANNOUNCER: That too, is an item worth considering.

B: But I would like to add another word of warning to farmers. The dusts used for treating peanuts are irritating to the eyes and it would be a good idea to wear goggles when applying them to your crop.

ANNOUNCER: Thanks a lot, (name), for telling us how to get the job of raising more peanuts per acre done and done well. And if farmers would like to know more about dusting and spraying, they can call on the county agent, the State Extension Service, or the State Experiment Station.

This material was prepared jointly by the Agricultural Adjustment Agency; the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering; and the Extension Service.